
Lightning Safety

According to the Lightning Protection Institute (www.lightning.org), lightning is the leading storm-related killer in the U.S. each year. Lightning associated with thunderstorms and sometimes tornadoes can pose a variety of fire hazards. Lightning's extreme electrical charge can cause destructive power surges through circuitry, burn holes in gas piping, explode brick and roofing materials, and ignite fires.

Here's how to stay safe if you're outdoors when lightning is in the area:

- If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance of lightning.
 - Look for shelter inside a home, large building, or a hard-topped vehicle right away.
 - Do not go under tall trees for shelter.
 - There is no place outside that is safe during a thunderstorm.
 - Wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder before leaving your shelter.
- If you are in or on open water, go to land and seek shelter immediately.
- If you feel your hair stand on end, that means lightning is about to strike.
 - Squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet.
 - Place your hands over your ears and put your head between your knees.
 - Make yourself the smallest target possible, and minimize contact with the ground. This is a last resort when a building or hard-topped vehicle is not available.
- If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and seek medical care right away.
 - Lightning-strike victims carry no electrical charge, so attend to them immediately.
 - Check their breathing, heartbeat, and pulse.
 - CPR may be necessary.

Here's how to stay safe if you are indoors during a thunderstorm with lightning in the area:

- If you are doing dishes, stop, turn the water off and get away from the sink.
- Avoid taking showers during thunderstorms.
- Keep away from windows and doors. Lightning can come through the glass.
- Avoid listening to electrical devices such as TV's, Radios, and Video Games though head phones.